

E7BJTRU1

Decision

1 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
2 SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

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3 IN THE MATTER OF THE TRUSTEESHIP
4 CREATED BY AMERICAN HOME MORTGAGE
5 INVESTMENT TRUST 2005-2 related to
6 the issuance of Mortgage-Backed
7 Notes pursuant to an Indenture dated
8 as of October 1, 2007,

14 Civ. 2494 AKH

9 WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A.,

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11 Petitioner,

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July 11, 2014
2:45 p.m.

Before:

HON. ALVIN K. HELLERSTEIN,

District Judge

APPEARANCES

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1 (Trial resumes)

2 (In open court)

3 THE COURT: Good afternoon, all. Be seated, please.

4 This proceeding is the result of a bifurcation. I am
5 focusing on the trustee's request for guidance and instructions
6 how to apply the trustee's obligation with regard to allocation
7 of losses to various categories of security. There are various
8 counterclaims and cross-claims as well to which I'll turn at
9 the conclusion of my remarks today.

10 The findings of fact and the conclusions of law are
11 lengthy. Rather than hold up everything today, burden the
12 Court Reporter, I will deliver a summary, with the idea, which
13 I hope is realistic, to file the complete findings of fact and
14 conclusions of law within a week. That will be my decision.
15 This is, in effect, an advance praecipe of it.

16 In June 2005, American Home Mortgage Investment Trust,
17 2005-2 issued a series of notes valued at \$5.8 billion, secured
18 by residential home mortgage loans. The notes were divided
19 into 26 classes, with different classes having different rates
20 of interest, different rights to payment, and different
21 measures of seniority.

22 In the event that the trust suffered losses or failed
23 to generate sufficient income to cover all the various classes
24 in the variety of priorities, the underlying agreements treated
25 the classes in a waterfall effect. In other words, if the

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1 trust was unable to make all promised interest and principal
2 payments, the holders of junior notes would stop receiving
3 payments before payments to the holders of more serious notes.

4 We focus in the proceedings that came before me,
5 classes of notes labeled 1-A-1, 1-A-2 and 1-A-3. The indenture
6 agreement between American Home Mortgage, Wells Fargo Bank and
7 Deutsche Bank, dated June 22, 2005, which governed the
8 allocation of payments to the note-holders allocated losses to
9 1-A-2 notes and then to 1-A-3 notes, providing in its operative
10 clause, Section 3.38 (a)(ninth), as follows:

11 "To the extent such realized losses are incurred in
12 respect of the Group I loans, they're allocated to the Class
13 1-A-2 notes and Class 1-A-3 notes in that order."

14 Because of an underlying dispute and inconsistency
15 among the terms of the suite of documents that govern the
16 issuance and rights and obligations of note-holders, Wells
17 Fargo has requested instructions regarding the allocation of
18 losses.

19 Wells Fargo, the petitioner, is a National Banking
20 Association. Its main office is in South Dakota. It
21 functioned as securities administrator for the trust. As such,
22 it is responsible for organizing payments to note-holders and
23 allocating losses to different classes of notes.

24 Sceptre, a Delaware limited liability company, has its
25 principal place of business in New York. It intervened in this

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1 action as a party in interest. Sceptre is a holder of Class
2 1-A-2 notes.

3 Semper also intervened. It is investment manager for
4 a fund having the same name and holds Class 1-A-3 notes. There
5 were four documents in the suite of documents which were issued
6 to investors: A private offering memorandum; a prospectus
7 supplement, dated June 20, 2005; a term sheet; and an indenture
8 agreement.

9 The offering documents, that is, the private offering
10 memorandum, prospectus supplement and the term sheet, are the
11 documents distributed to potential investors, were inconsistent
12 with the indenture in one material respect:

13 While Section 3.38 of the indenture provided that
14 losses should be allocated first to the Class 1-A-2 notes and
15 then to the Class 1-A-3 notes, the prospectus and term sheet
16 provided that losses should be allocated first to the Class
17 1-A-3 notes and then to the Class 1-A-2 notes.

18 The indenture was created after the offering documents
19 were created. The various drafts of the offering documents and
20 the final version introduced into evidence provided
21 consistently that losses would be attributed to Class 1-A-3
22 note-holders first and then to Class 1-A-2 note-holders. Each
23 used the following language in the drafting:

24 "Realized losses will be allocated to the Class 1-A-2
25 notes and Class 1-A-3 notes in reduction of the note principal

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1 balance thereof, until reduced to zero; provided, however, that
2 any realized losses allocated to the Class 1-A-2 notes and the
3 Class 1-A-3 notes shall be allocated first, to the Class 1-A-3
4 notes, and second to the Class 1-A-2 notes."

5 During the drafting process, the language conveying
6 this proposition was changed to eliminate the proviso clause.
7 The drafts provided realized losses will be allocated to the
8 Class 1-A-3 notes and Class 1-A-2 notes in that order, in
9 reduction of the note principal balance thereof, until reduced
10 to zero. The concision of language carrying the same idea made
11 the proposition to be advanced simpler and clearer, in fewer
12 words, without intending to change the substance. The final
13 version will produce the language in more detail, showing the
14 intent.

15 The initial drafts of the indenture conformed to the
16 initial drafts of the offering documents with the same proviso
17 clause. However, as the changes went forward, the indenture
18 came to be revised to conform or to attempt to conform with the
19 changes in the other documents.

20 The appropriate draft of the indenture was worked on
21 at 1:11 am on the morning of June 22, 2005 by the lawyers from
22 Thacher Proffitt & Wood, LLP. In making the changes, an error
23 cropped in specifically in a way that 1-A-2 and 1-A-3 were
24 crossed out to accomplish the change. In order to make the
25 language more concise and to follow this sequence of losses, it

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1 was necessary to reverse the order appearing in the clause of
2 the documents.

3 However, in effecting that change, the strike-out and
4 replacement that was accomplished in the drafts was not carried
5 through into the indenture. There was no explanation why this
6 should be an inconsistency between the indenture and the
7 offering documents that preceded it.

8 In any event, the final version of the indenture
9 created this inconsistency by failing to be conformed to the
10 offering document. I find that the structure of the
11 transaction indicates that the allocation of the losses
12 described in the indenture was the consequence of a mistake,
13 and I'll carry this indication forward under three categories:

14 The first, nomenclature. The indenture, in the way it
15 describes the various classes of notes, consistently refers to
16 a lower numbered note as senior to a higher numbered note in
17 respect of loss allocations. Thus Class I-M notes are senior
18 to Class I-M-2 notes, and Class I-M-2 notes are senior to class
19 M-3 notes. Class 1-A-1 notes are the most senior notes, but
20 the sequence between the seniority of 2 and that of 3 has been
21 flipped, so the indenture 3 became more senior to 2 and 2
22 junior to 3, which was inconsistent with the sequences of the
23 other classes.

24 With regard to interest rates, I can take judicial
25 notice that in issuance of debentures in comparison of risks,

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1 higher interest rates are provided for securities of greater
2 risk. However, the Class 1-A-2 notes were assigned a lower
3 interest rate than a Class 1-A-3 notes, suggesting that the
4 Class 1-A-3 notes should be ones with greater risk or junior to
5 the Class 1-A-2 notes. The indenture was opposite to that;

6 Third, with respect to credit enhancement, the final
7 term sheet described the credit enhancement of each set of
8 notes, reflecting the percentage of the total value of the
9 transaction that must suffer losses before those notes will
10 suffer losses. The higher the credit enhancement, the more
11 senior the note. The final term sheet gave a Class 1-A-2 notes
12 a credit enhancement of 17.55 percent, higher than the credit
13 enhancement given to Class 1-A-3 notes of 7.55 percent, thereby
14 suggesting that the 1-A-2 notes were supposed to be more senior
15 to the 1-A-3 notes. The indenture became drafted to be
16 inconsistent with this.

17 No one seems to have noticed the inconsistency between
18 the indenture and the offering documents until the press
19 release was issued by Moody's on or about August 23, 2010.
20 Moody's press release stated that it had corrected the ratings
21 of two tranches of these notes, the Class 1-A-2 and the Class
22 1-A-3.

23 It described the condition earlier when the 1-A-3
24 notes were given a lower classification than 1-A-2 notes.
25 However, Moody's disclosure went on, the pooling and service

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1 agreement which was the indenture reversed that, and the
2 trustee, it said, confirmed that it would follow the terms of
3 the PSA. Moody's stated that its ratings had been adjusted to
4 reflect this change, giving the A-2 notes a lower rating than
5 the A-3 notes.

6 In August 2011, Intex, another company that advised
7 investors, notified its customers that there was a conflict
8 between the offering documents and the indenture. It offered
9 an ability to model cash flows depending on whether the
10 offering document proved to be correct or the indenture or PSA
11 proved to be correct.

12 In January 2012 after these notices, Och-Ziff Capital
13 bought 50 million original face value Class 1-A-2 notes from
14 from Credit Agricole, previous holder of the notes at 23.4
15 percent of their face value. Och-Ziff was aware of the
16 discrepancy when it made its purpose and took that discrepancy
17 into account. It considered the value of the Class 1-A-2 notes
18 as if they were senior to the Class 1-A-3 notes.

19 It also hypothesizes the situation where the value
20 will be junior, thus creating an upside bend and a downside
21 bend to the investment. Analyzing both upside and downside
22 potential by reason of this inconsistency, Och-Ziff was
23 satisfied with the value of its investment, and in December
24 2013 bought additional Class 1-A-2 notes. Originally it had
25 purchased 50 million face value, then it bought 20 million face

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1 value. In March 2014, it bought \$1 million of face value at
2 prices that varied between 23.4 percent to 42.4 percent, to
3 44.4 percent.

4 In June 2013, Och-Ziff created Sceptre as a special
5 purpose vehicle to hold notes. The other beneficiaries of the
6 holding were investors in Och-Ziff. After Sceptre, it
7 purchased 26 million original face value of Class 1-A-3 notes
8 in late September or early October 2012, purchasing done for
9 from the previous holder, Nomura Securities.

10 Semper's trader, Mr. Peresechensky, testified that on
11 September 27, 2012, he submitted a bid for the Class 1-A-3
12 notes. Peresechensky claimed he was not aware of the
13 discrepancy between the indenture and the offering documents.
14 He acknowledged, however, that he actually looked at the
15 indenture because he had become aware of a nomenclature
16 abnormality, as he termed it, about the seniority of the Class
17 1-A-3 and Class 1-A-2 notes.

18 He testified that after reviewing the indenture and
19 market data, he concluded that the Class 1-A-3 notes were
20 senior to the Class 1-A-2 notes, but in coming to this view, I
21 find he had to consider what he called the nomenclature
22 abnormality; and, thus, was aware of the inconsistency between
23 the terms of the indenture and the terms of the related
24 documents. Semper's bid reflected 47.25 percent of face value,
25 and it was accepted by Nomura the same day.

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1 Peresechensky testified that on September 28th, 2012,
2 after Semper's bid on the notes had been accepted, but before
3 it was final, he learned about the discrepancy from another
4 trader, Ali Haghighat. He learned that the discrepancy, about
5 this discrepancy because Peresechensky had attempted to sell
6 Class 1-A-3 notes to Haghighat on that same day of September
7 28, 2012, and Haghighat agreed to buy at a price higher than
8 Semper had paid.

9 But 10 minutes Haghighat retracted his bid because, as
10 he termed it, a problem existed with the 1-A-3 notes.
11 Haghighat told Peresechensky that the Class 1-A-3 notes were
12 junior to the Class 1-A-2 notes and sent Peresechensky some
13 language describing the discrepancy between the indenture and
14 the prospectus.

15 Peresechensky allowed Haghighat to back out of the
16 deal, claiming it had not been finalized and because he had a
17 good relationship with Haghighat. He did not try to back out
18 of the purchase of the notes, claiming that it was less
19 opportunity to do that because of the passage of a day or so,
20 whereas Haghighat wanted to back out on the same day that he
21 had purchased. However, both trades had actually become
22 effected.

23 I find that Semper's decision to invest and remain
24 invested was based on an evaluation of what the value of the
25 Class 1-A-3 notes would be if those notes were treated as

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1 senior and what their value would be if they were treated as
2 junior and that the investment decision they made was a knowing
3 evaluation of the benefits and detriments of each position.

4 In 2011, before either Sceptre or Semper had bought
5 any notes, Wells Fargo had received communications from various
6 holders of Class 1-A-2 notes, requesting that Wells Fargo
7 allocate losses according to the terms of the offering
8 documents rather than the indenture.

9 In response, Wells Fargo wrote to one holder to
10 explain its position, stating that absent an amendment to the
11 indenture, it would allocate losses to Class 1-A-2 and 1-A-3 as
12 described in the indenture. That is first to 1-A-2 and then to
13 1-A-3, and would not amend the indenture, they could not amend
14 the indenture without the consent of all affected note-holders.
15 That is what Section 5.07 of the indenture funds. However,
16 Section 9.01 provides the indenture may be modified by a
17 supplemental indenture without the consent of holders to cure
18 any ambiguity, to correct or supplement any provision in that
19 document or any supplemental indenture that may be inconsistent
20 with other provisions in that document or any supplemental
21 condition.

22 There was also provision for modification with a
23 consent of holders that required a hundred percent. Wells
24 Fargo stated that it would not solicit the consent of other
25 note-holders unless the first note-holder indemnify Wells Fargo

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1 for costs associated with the solicitation.

2 Various solicitations occurred between Wells Fargo and
3 Och-Ziff. Wells Fargo tried to rescind the solicitation.
4 Semper refused, and eventually on May 10, 2013, Wells Fargo
5 stated that if it could not get a hundred percent consent, it
6 reserved the right, but assumed no obligation to take further
7 action to resolve the inconsistency.

8 Semper objected to the consent solicitation and
9 requested Wells Fargo that it reconfirm that losses would be
10 allocated first to Class 1-A-2 and then to 1-A-3.

11 On January 17th, 2013, Wells Fargo began this case by
12 filing a petition in Minnesota District Court, 4th Judicial
13 District, Hennepin County, asking for an order of the Court
14 regarding the proper allocation of losses between the Class
15 1-A-2 and 1-A-3 note-holders. In both Minnesota Statute
16 501B.16, Wells Fargo stated that it was driven to file the
17 petition because for the first time the trust would experience
18 losses that would necessarily affect the junior note-holder,
19 and it was required to determine which note, which class of
20 note was more senior and more junior in order properly to
21 allocate losses.

22 (Continued on next page)

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1 THE COURT: Wells Fargo gave notice of the petition to
2 all affected note holders. Scepter intervened and then
3 promptly removed the case to the United States District Court
4 for the district of Minnesota. Semper intervened as a party in
5 interest. All parties stipulated that this action would be
6 transferred to the United States District Court for the
7 Southern District of New York, where unhappily I became the
8 judge by random selection of the case.

9 Wells Fargo sent notices concerning this proceeding
10 was dated January 27, February 20, March 14 and April 9, 2014,
11 and all exhibits to this proceeding.

12 Wells Fargo asked the Court to instruct it how the
13 indentureship should be interpreted and whether it should be
14 reformed because of a mutual mistake. It did not argue in
15 favor of either version. Semper argued that a trust
16 instruction proceeding was improper, that the indenture could
17 not be reformed and it favored an instruction in favor of its
18 position.

19 It's the obligation of the Court to represent the
20 interests of all parties in interest, even those not
21 ascertained and not in being. I find that I have jurisdiction,
22 that there is complete diversity between the plaintiff and all
23 defendants, and that there is proper venue pursuant to a forum
24 selection clause.

25 Since this is a diversity case, transferred to me from

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1 the United States District Court for the District of Minnesota,
2 I apply the law of the transferor court. As a matter of
3 constitutional application, in the *Erie Thompson v. York* and
4 *Klaxon v. Stentor*, the transferor court must apply the law of
5 the State court, since this is an adversity case.

6 So I applied the law that would be applied in the
7 United States District Court, the District of Minnesota, and
8 the District of Minnesota applies the law of the State court in
9 terms of substantive issues. For this purpose, tax limitations
10 is considered substantive. However, under Minnesota
11 choice-of-law rules, statutes of limitations are considered
12 procedural unless a circumstance arises which requires them not
13 to do so. The citations for these propositions will be in the
14 findings and conclusions that are filed next week.

15 This dispute or conflict in choice of law, however, is
16 a conflict without any meaning because, as I find and as I will
17 soon develop, the law of Minnesota and the law of New York,
18 which is the law that's supposed to govern under the forum
19 selection clause and the choice-of-law clause in the parties'
20 agreement in the indenture, come out to be the same.

21 Minnesota's trust instruction proceeding is a
22 well-established procedure at which trustees can seek judicial
23 guidance from a court about how to resolve different questions
24 of judgment, and by giving notice to all affected parties,
25 obtain a reliable and authoritative decision of the court,

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1 authoritative on the trustee and authoritative on the parties
2 affected.

3 The Restatement (Third) of Trusts, statement 71,
4 described trust instruction proceedings as follows: "A trustee
5 or beneficiary may apply to an appropriate court for
6 instructions regarding the administration or distribution of a
7 trust if there is reasonable doubt about the powers or duties
8 of the trusteeship or about the proper interpretation of the
9 trust proceedings."

10 Minnesota recognizes these proceedings under its
11 statute law, section 501B.16, but the roots of such proceedings
12 go back to equity, the Court's equity. Thus, a "petition for
13 instructions gives the Court supervisory control over the
14 trustee to protect the trustee when the meaning of the trust
15 instrument is in doubt and to protect beneficiaries against the
16 trustee's inefficiency, incompetency or neglect."

17 Under the Minnesota statutes, notice is provided for
18 all affected beneficiaries. Affected beneficiaries may appear
19 as interested parties. If they don't appear, they are,
20 nevertheless, bound by the Court's determination.

21 Semper has moved to dismiss the action or portions of
22 the action, as barred by New York's statute of limitations on
23 actions based on reformation or mistake. The statute of
24 limitations in New York on an action to reform a contract
25 begins to run on the date when the mistake is made, not when it

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1 was discovered.

2 Semper argues that the action is really an action for
3 reformation based on mutual mistake and that a six-year statute
4 of limitations governs. I found, however, that a trust
5 instruction procedure, which this is and which it was labeled,
6 may or may not encompass a reformation but revise its own
7 statute of limitations to guide the parties.

8 Under both New York and Minnesota, statute of
9 limitations are procedural, as I said before. Minnesota has a
10 borrowing statute, based on the Uniform Conflict of Laws
11 Limitations Act, codified in Minnesota statute Section 541.30.
12 The borrowing statute applies to claims which are substantively
13 based upon the law of one or more state other than Minnesota.
14 If the claim is substantively based on the law of another
15 state, here in New York, the limitation period of that other
16 state applies. But where it's procedural, as Minnesota calls
17 it, Minnesota applies its own statute of limitations.

18 The issue becomes complicated because if a strong
19 policy exists as, for example, a policy to apply the intent of
20 the parties expressed in an agreement, courts will sometimes
21 forego the notion of applying its own procedural statute of
22 limitations and look to the statute in an agreement. Here,
23 pointing to New York.

24 But whether in New York or in Minnesota, I hold, the
25 statute of limitations that would be applied will be that

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1 applicable to a proceeding brought by a trustee to seek
2 instructions how to interpret conflicting clauses in an
3 instrument. If it's necessary in giving the answer or as a
4 consequence of giving the answer to reform the document, that
5 doesn't mean that the statute of limitations for a contract
6 reformation necessarily applies because the statute that
7 applies is determined by the nature of the cause of action.
8 And the nature of the cause of action, whether in Minnesota or
9 in New York is the common law notion of courts supervising
10 trusts and giving guidance where a trustee lacks guidance in
11 the application of law to an instrument.

12 A trust instruction proceeding, in its very nature, is
13 not an adversary action. When Wells Fargo commenced this
14 proceeding, it was the only party in the case and did not
15 assert a right or claim to anything. Subject matter
16 jurisdiction, which depends on an existing case or controversy,
17 arose when Scepter LLC intervened as a party in interest
18 because, at that point in time, as occurred in the removal
19 proceeding that brought this action from a State court to the
20 United States District Court in Minnesota, an adversary
21 relationship was created between Scepter and the neutral Wells
22 Fargo.

23 Scepter was arguing for a specific application. Wells
24 Fargo was seeking instruction as between two competing
25 applications. And the adversary nature of the proceeding was

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1 confirmed and made clear when Semper also intervened because,
2 at that point in time, a true and complete adversary
3 relationship arose between Scepter and Semper.

4 Now, I will acknowledge that subject matter
5 jurisdiction attaches at the outset of a proceeding, and were
6 this a question that was put to the United States District
7 Court in Minnesota or to me before the parties intervened, I
8 might have felt differently about subject matter jurisdiction.
9 But when the case came to me, it was fully adversary; and
10 second, there was a compelling need, because of the need to
11 effect distributions, for the trustee to obtain guidance and to
12 act on the guidance.

13 It was necessary to quiet the markets and to apply an
14 authoritative rule to govern the trust allocation. Otherwise,
15 there would be irreparable damage to the trustee and to all the
16 investors. The job of sorting out who was entitled to what,
17 after a distribution was made, when there could be additional
18 sales hypothecations and other kinds of disposals of various
19 kinds of investments would have created havoc for all the
20 investors. From a practical point of view, this Court has
21 subject matter jurisdiction.

22 In researching the law of the statute of limitations,
23 I found no case, neither in Minnesota nor New York, which
24 applied a statute of limitations to a trust instruction
25 proceeding. Semper argued that there was one in Minnesota in a

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1 case called *In re: Trusteeship of Trust Created Under Trust*
2 *Agreement Dated December 31, 1974*, reported at 674 N.W.2d 222,
3 (Min. Ct. App. 2004).

4 In that case, the Minnesota Court of Appeals applied a
5 statute of limitations to a trust instruction proceeding, but
6 that case was a case that had to determine the paternity of
7 children. The Minnesota Parentage Act created a presumption
8 that a husband is the biological father of a child born to his
9 wife, and provides that the presumption could be rebutted only
10 before the child reached three years of age.

11 The Minnesota Court of Appeals held that the trust
12 instruction proceeding would be governed by this irrebuttable
13 presumption because the children at issue were older than
14 three. The statute of limitations was one dealing with
15 contests of paternity, which is governed by a different rule
16 from the law governing instructions to trustees and one where
17 the importance of settling paternity is crucial. The statute
18 is in a different part of the statute book, it's codified in a
19 different way, and it doesn't apply to a proceeding of the
20 nature we have here.

21 The trust instruction proceedings are not proceedings
22 to give general advice to trustees. A trust instruction
23 proceeding can be brought only when a trustee is confronted
24 with an actual, concrete problem. It cannot be brought before
25 that.

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1 This case could not have been brought before the
2 allocation of losses that would be necessarily affected,
3 whether a class 1-A-3 note holder or a class 1-A-2 note holder
4 would suffer the application of a loss. That occurred, as I
5 understand it, now, in 2014. It was not until 2011, 2012 that
6 the trustee was even aware of the contradiction between the
7 offering documents and the trust indenture.

8 So since the action could be brought only currently,
9 there has been no running of a statute of limitations. Even
10 the customary six-year statute that applies to actions on the
11 contracts or, as in New York, where there is no other cause of
12 action.

13 The accrual date is crucial, and the accrual date is
14 one when the real case or controversy applies. And certainly,
15 the trustee could not have brought it before it was brought
16 home to him by the Moody's disclosure and by inquiries from
17 various note holders, which occurred in 2011 and 2012, that
18 there was a contradiction which required a special application
19 as to one class or another.

20 I conclude that Minnesota courts would follow the
21 statement rule that a party can begin a trust instruction
22 proceeding only when faced with a concrete problem. The
23 language is as follows, and it's from section 71, Restatement
24 (Third) of Trusts:

25 "Because of concern regarding burdens on the judicial

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1 system and unwarranted costs and delays in the trust
2 administration, a trustee or beneficiary normally is not
3 entitled to instructions with respect to the administration of
4 a trust unless there is some reasonable doubt about the extent
5 of the trustee's powers or duties or about proper
6 interpretation of the trust provisions.

7 "Nor will the Court instruct the trustee as to a
8 question that may never arise, or that may arise only in the
9 future, unless some need is shown for current resolution of the
10 matter. Thus, a court ordinarily will not instruct a trustee
11 on the distribution of trust property before the time arrives
12 for making, or at least planning, that distribution."

13 That makes this action timely under Minnesota. The
14 situation is the same, as I said before, in New York. A trust
15 instruction proceeding in New York would have been brought as a
16 special proceeding under CPLR article 77. There is no specific
17 statute of limitations for trust instruction proceedings under
18 the article 2 of the CPLR, the governing statutes of
19 limitations. A six-year statute of limitations is provided for
20 action based on contracts or actions for which no other
21 limitation is specifically prescribed by law. That's CPLR 213.

22 New York statute of limitations begins to run when the
23 causes of action accrues, and that's provided by CPLR section
24 203(a). A cause of action accrues when a party can first bring
25 suit. That occurred when there was something real about the

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1 allocation, not something far off in the future, and it makes
2 the action current when it was brought.

3 I, therefore, hold that the proceedings timely under
4 both New York and Minnesota law. I deny the motion to dismiss
5 based on statutes of limitations.

6 There are various equitable defenses that Semper
7 advances. None of them has merit. There was no laches. There
8 was no delay in bringing the lawsuit. There was a period of
9 time where Wells Fargo considered the possibility of amendment
10 and thought through what it could do, but there was no
11 prejudice to anyone's interest. If Semper wanted to get out or
12 if Scepter wanted to get out of its investment, it could have
13 done so at a profit, maybe not full profit that it would have
14 liked, but a profit. And there was no laches.

15 There was no equitable estoppel because there was no
16 assertion of a position, which the party had to reverse. It's
17 true that the trustee proceeded under the indenture, rather
18 than the conflicting disclosure statements in the offering
19 documents, but when the contradiction was pointed out to it,
20 the trustee ultimately was asked to resolve the issue, could
21 not resolve the issue and brought the lawsuit. That does not
22 make out an estoppel.

23 And there was no unclean hands nor unjust enrichment.
24 Both parties, Scepter and Semper, bought on their own analyses
25 of the upside and the downside of the various interpretations

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1 and took the risk of what occurred.

2 As I indicated before, these documents are
3 contradictory. It's clear to me that the intent manifested by
4 the indenture could not have been the intent of the parties.
5 If it had been the intent of the parties, materially different
6 from the intent that was displayed in the offering documents
7 distributed to the public, it would have required an amendment
8 that would be publicly disclosed presumably in the supplement
9 to the prospectus.

10 The fact that there was no change in the supplement
11 prospectus indicates that the parties contemplated the intent
12 disclosed in the offering documents was the operative intent.
13 Without an amendment to conform to the indenture, assuming that
14 the indenture accurately reflected the intent of the parties,
15 there would have been a material misrepresentation of fact in
16 violation of section 10b of the Securities Exchange Act and
17 like provisions of the Trust Indenture Act.

18 Only if one proceeds in the realization that there was
19 a scrivener's error with regard to the trust indenture, does
20 this case make sense, and that is consistent with the
21 nomenclature, with the coupons, with the way that security is
22 enhanced and all other features of these notes.

23 I construe the suite of documents that has been used,
24 not just the trust indenture, and I hold that the trust
25 indenture must be reformed so that the intent it describes is

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1 consistent with the intent of the parties in creating this
2 suite of documents that was disclosed to the public and that no
3 one is hurt by this because all investors were aware of the
4 discrepancy.

5 Semper argues that a decision of the United States
6 District Court for the Central District of California holds
7 that investors who rely on an indenture, standing alone, cannot
8 be disturbed from their reasonable expectations. The case is
9 *Citigroup Global Markets, Inc. v. Impac Secured Assets Corp.*,
10 11 Civ. 4514 (C.D. Cal. May 3, 2012).

11 That case was an action of the Federal Securities Law.
12 Plaintiff had bought securities based on its reading of a
13 publicly filed pooling and services agreement or trust
14 indenture. The problem was that the defendant had publicly
15 filed an inaccurate version of the pooling and services
16 agreement. As a defense to an action against it, the defendant
17 argued that it was unreasonable for the plaintiff to have
18 relied on an inaccurate version of the PSA because the offering
19 documents gave different information.

20 The court rejected this argument, concluding that it
21 was irrelevant under the Federal Securities Law whether the
22 plaintiffs' reliance on the incorrect PSA was reasonable. The
23 court stated that, in any event, the plaintiffs' reliance on an
24 incorrect PSA was reasonable, even though the PSA conflicted
25 with the offering documents, it superseded. The court stated

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1 that the differences between a PSA and a prospectus supplement
2 are not conflicts because the document are clear that any such
3 differences redound in favor of the PSA. And there is a
4 similar clause in the prospectus in this case.

5 But even assuming that the California court was
6 correct in its interpretation of the securities laws, and even
7 assuming that it also expressed New York law, Semper's argument
8 about articulating a rule describing how a suite of documents
9 should be construed is not something I would follow. The
10 purpose of reformation in connection with a suite of documents
11 is to create or cause consistency to override inconsistency.

12 It's not tolerable in a disclosure regime for
13 important disclosure documents, like prospectuses and term
14 sheets and private placement memoranda, to be inconsistent with
15 even a fundamental contract like an indenture. If an indenture
16 overrode that which was disclosed to the public, as I pointed
17 out before, a material undisclosed change is made in the
18 offering documents, creating the opportunity for discrepancy
19 among buyers, favoring some and prejudicing others. The basis
20 of the security laws is to create consistency, so that all
21 investors are on an equal footing.

22 If Citigroup Global Markets is interpreted to allow
23 inconsistencies of this nature, other than the special point of
24 reliance in terms of a defendant, it creates the potential for
25 inequality and creates potential for liability where there

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1 should be none.

2 We did not have a case where reasonable expectations
3 of a good-faith purchase of a value has to be protected. As I
4 held, Peresechensky was aware of the risks, depending on the
5 interpretation to be favored either of the indenture or of the
6 offering documents. He made an investment decision based on
7 his analysis of upside and downside.

8 Neither am I persuaded that another investor might be
9 favored and another investor lose out. What I have to do is
10 the right thing, and that is to create a consistency with a
11 clear intent, clear intent to have consistency.

12 Accordingly, the trustee is instructed to apply loss
13 allocation as disclosed in the term sheet, the prospectus and
14 the private offering memorandum. The indenture will be
15 reformed to carry out the change that should have been made at
16 1:11 a.m. on January 21, I think, 2005, and thereby create
17 consistency among all the operating documents.

18 These expressions are not final. The final version
19 will be that which is filed, presumably, this week.

20 Now, I note that there are various counterclaims and
21 cross-claims, which for the purpose of obtaining a speedy
22 resolution that was needed in this case, we left for another
23 date. I have a strong feeling that the decision I delivered
24 today, and which will be solidified with the final papers to be
25 filed later, will make these counterclaims and cross-claims

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Decision

1 academic.

2 I think the parties probably need finality because one
3 or the other might wish to appeal. They won't be able to
4 appeal as long as the counterclaims and cross-claims are here.
5 So I'm wondering how we should proceed. Mr. Rollin? If you
6 haven't thought about it and want time to think about it, I
7 wouldn't mind that.

8 MR. ROLLIN: No, I think that's right, your Honor. I
9 think we need some time to think about it, particularly after
10 we see your Honor's final rulings and any post-judgment
11 considerations we may have.

12 THE COURT: What's your time pressure, Mr. Johnson?

13 MR. JOHNSON: Your Honor, we do not yet know how this
14 month is turning out, but we suspect that the losses will not
15 hit these classes this month. It is possible they will hit in
16 August. So, you know, ideally, we would like to have
17 resolution of this within the next 30 days.

18 THE COURT: I can do that. So what I will do is when
19 I issue the findings and conclusions, I have a last paragraph
20 called first status conference, and at that time, we'll figure
21 out how we approach the rest of the case. And that status
22 conference will be a week or so after the decision. Will that
23 be satisfactory?

24 MR. ROLLIN: Yes, your Honor.

25 THE COURT: Have I missed anything? Do I need to make

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Decision

1 any more rulings? I want to thank you again for an excellently
2 presented case.

3 MR. PICKHARDT: Thank you, your Honor.

4 MR. ROLLIN: Thank you, your Honor.

5 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, your Honor.

6 (Adjourned)